

LETTERS

Don't "Heavy-Up" the 2d ACR

Dear Sir:

I read the article in the January-February edition of *ARMOR* about the 2d ACR with great interest. LTC Kevin Benson makes an interesting case for adding weight, protection, and firepower to the regiment; yet I remain unconvinced.

While there is much to be said about the choices, the fact is, the 2d Cavalry represents the only substantial structure change in maneuver forces the Army has made in response to the end of the Cold War. It is designed to be deployable, versatile and lethal, ideal for missions such as Haiti, Somalia, and Bosnia. It was not designed to slug it out against a heavy threat. We need two heavy regiments for that mission; but that is not the issue here.

I find it notable that the article that said farewell to the M551 was in the same edition. The analogy of the combat vehicle which was the classic victim of *requirements* creep, — designed to do all things for all people, thus satisfying no one — cannot be lost on the structure of the 2d Cavalry Regiment. The Army cannot have it both ways; light cavalry is either immediately deployable or it is not useful.

In fact, it is my belief that fielding the Armored Gun System to the reconnaissance troops, as was scheduled, would have been a serious error. What is needed is a lighter vehicle with a small cannon that offers improved crew protection over the armored HMMWV, yet is easily air transportable. Prior to the decision to build the AGS, numerous platforms with varying degrees of capabilities in lethality, survivability, and deployability were examined as potential Sheridan replacements. Perhaps the time has come to recognize the world as it is, not as we wish it were, and reexamine some of the less costly modifications to existing systems. An excellent candidate, but surely not the only one, would be the M113A3 with a mini-turret cannon capability. The AGS would have been the ideal combat vehicle for the tank companies which, if necessary, could have been scrambled into an ad hoc battalion to assist in short-term *guard* missions. The more likely missions in today's world, however, will demand more dismounts — both scouts and infantry, an idea LTC Benson dismisses without convincing argument.

The Army must use its creativity to break the strategic lift paradigm; and this will not happen by making units heavier. We need Force XXI mounted units to meet the heavy, most dangerous threat. We also need mounted forces that can meet the less dangerous but infinitely more likely threats as we pursue the National Security Strategy of *Engagement and Enlargement*. The Army's current force structure situation is analogous

to that of the Cold War Air Force. We must ensure the most dangerous threat is deterred by constantly modernizing the strategic force (then ICBMs, now M1s and M2/3s); yet we must be able to respond to the more likely requirements (then tactical aircraft, now light cavalry),

How big you are does not always decide success on the battlefield. This is especially true in the realm of reconnaissance. The light cavalry regiment was not designed with a major regional contingency in mind; it was designed for **everything else**. The Army should provide it the right equipment to complete its missions and so that it may remain, **Always Ready!**

COL TOM MOLINO
Burke, Va.

Sheridans "Retired" to the NTC

Dear Sir:

I concur with readers that are concerned that the 82nd lost a unique capability, but I wanted to set the record straight on the "retirement" of the M551A1 at its farewell. The M551A1s of the 3-73 Armor are not retiring, but in a twist of fate, are returning to one of the original Sheridan units — the 1st Squadron, 11th ACR. 1/11 portrays the 125th Guards Tank Regiment of the 60th MRD. These M551A1s, with thermal sights, will be converted to visually modified T-80s. These vehicles will more closely match the capabilities of a real T-80. Although they will no longer fire "live" ammo, they will participate in many more battles here at the National Training Center. They could conceivably serve in the armored force for another seven years, until the OPFOR Surrogate Vehicle-Tank (OSV-T) is developed and fielded. Another generation of Blackhorse Troopers will serve on the General Sheridan.

MAJ BART HOWARD
SXO, 1/11 ACR
Ft. Irwin, Calif.

Second Thoughts on New Ideas

Dear Sir:

I have been impressed by the thoughtful ideas concerning maneuver warfare and the implications of Force XXI operations that have appeared in *ARMOR* intermittently since Desert Storm. Most recently, the article by Captain Robert Bateman, "Training for Maneuver" in the Jan-Feb 97 issue is a thought-provoking piece which challenges conventional thinking and should help fuel the exchange of ideas. So also should LTC Robert Leonhard's new book, *Fighting by*

Minutes: Time and the Art of War, reviewed by Captain Bateman in the same issue. We obviously have at least a small group of young officers thinking seriously and imaginatively about the profession.

I agree with Captain Bateman that despite the apparent intent of TRADOC to move doctrinally away from attrition warfare, the force-on-force, sandbox way of tactical training still dominates most professional thinking and exercises. (The doctrine writers have been in denial a long time on this subject, at least since the Active Defense came under general attack in the late '70s. BG Joseph K. Kellogg was quoted in *AUSA News*, July 1996, asserting "Attrition warfare, we don't play that way anymore.")

Without question, it's hard to get beyond the tactical level in actual maneuver training on the ground, and the Army will always have the absolute requirement to be proficient in head-to-head conflict aimed at destruction of enemy forces, as Captain Bateman acknowledged. These skills must be drilled. Beyond tactical proficiency, however, there are a lot of concepts that need to be challenged and wrung out, and the current debate is healthy. I hope the Louisiana Maneuvers people are paying attention. To further the discussion, I offer a couple of observations/questions for consideration.

- Almost all of the contributors to the debate appear to assume an essentially conventional enemy and battlefield. How can we get beyond that limitation in training and thinking about the potential real-world challenges? Are we armor officers reluctant to give up the known-type enemy, fearing a reduced, unclear role?

- Several writers have suggested that the doctrinal emphasis on synchronization has a counter-productive side. In view of the absence of known details or good intelligence about most of our potential unconventional enemies, should the Army reassess its commitment to detailed planning, repeated rehearsals, and highly synchronized operations as essential components of battlefield success? Do we risk losing the positive effects of carefully orchestrated combat power applied at the tactical level if we move toward more decentralized, opportunistic operational controls? Are synchronization and *Auftragstaktik* compatible without accommodating modifications?

- Do concepts such as the objective, centers of gravity, rules of engagement, and force security require significant revision for contingency operations? In fact, in view of the many possible contingency scenarios, are we reduced to train for them at the tactical and operational levels solely by computer simulations? If so, how can we ensure that the assumptions and data buried in the software are relevant?

It appears that one of the possible weak links in TRADOC's planning for the 21st

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century is provision for the input of junior leaders who, after all, will be the senior leaders implementing our emerging doctrine. Providing a firm link and ensuring consideration of the new ideas should probably be one of the key roles of the school commandants. You're providing a good forum. Keep up the good work.

JOHN C. FAITH
MG (Ret.) U.S. Army

Thoughts on Excellence in Armor

Dear Sir:

I enjoyed CSM Davis' informative article, "A Reflection of Success: The Excellence in Armor Soldier," (Jan-Feb 97). I was an EIA participant in one of the early classes back in 1985. As I crossed the bows into the officer corps, I took all of my enlisted knowledge with me and applied it aggressively. I have encouraged my eligible soldiers to enroll and learn from the program. I also keep a close eye on my colleagues to make sure that these guys are on tanks, and not driving HMMWVs. We tend to want to take squared-away guys off tanks and make them drivers.

CPT B.B. CRAIG
Cdr, A Co, 1-67 Armor
Ft. Hood, Texas

In-Service Recruit Program Cautions

Dear Sir:

There is apparently some misconception in the Regular Army about the "In-service Recruit Program." The majority of in-service recruits that have been assigned to my unit have decided to just quit soon after arrival. They are under the impression that they can take it or leave it with no consequences for going AWOL from the National Guard. This seems to stem from the idea that the National Guard is not really a part of the Army, and it is OK to quit. This is not the case at all.

When you leave the active Army and are thinking about joining the Reserve Component, you must take into account the following. First of all, you are entering into unemployment and may have some difficulty. The National Guard and Reserves is a part-time job and will not always make ends meet. The different states usually have their own benefits above the usual school benefits; you will have to contact the National Guard representative in your state for details. There may be some restrictions, and you may have to serve a term longer than your remaining service obligation to get some state benefits. For instance, in Ohio you must serve six years in the Ohio National Guard for 60% of your tuition to be paid by

the state at an approved institution in Ohio. Approved institution means a state-funded school like Ohio State or Cincinnati Technical College; there are many all over the state. It can be a good deal if you are ready to buckle down and study. The affiliation bonus is usually for a specific critical MOS, and the town with a guard unit with that MOS may be a long drive each weekend. You should take that into account when thinking of the National Guard. Also, the uniforms you were issued in basic training will belong to the National Guard if you become an in-service recruit. Yes, you are responsible to have your whole initial issue upon reporting to your Guard unit. On the plus side of this, you usually will be too far from an active duty clothing sales store to maintain your uniforms. In the National Guard, you will not receive a clothing allowance, but you will get direct exchange (DX) of your initial issue as well as TA-50.

There are some other misconceptions that must be cleared up about guard service, especially for the 19-series CMF soldier. You must pass the APFT once a year - not a watered down APFT, but the real McCoy as stated in FM 21-20. This level of physical fitness may be difficult to maintain when you work a civilian job all week, and the time to stay in shape may elude you. We do not change the standards. Most guys tend to grow horizontally when they leave active duty and first come into the Guard. We are required to meet the standards of AR 600-9; do not come into the Army National Guard and get fat. If you received any affiliation bonus or state benefits and are discharged for being overweight or failing the APFT, you will probably have to pay it all, or a prorated portion, back.

You tankers will still be responsible for TCGST skills, a decent reticle aim on the M-COFT if you are a gunner, and all of the other skills tankers need, active or reserve. You scouts will have to maintain all of your skills as a scout and possibly learn some new ones. You will only have one weekend a month and approximately two uninterrupted weeks a year to train and maintain these skills. This may be even more difficult because the training facilities are not usually as available as they are on active duty. Your unit may have to get on a bus and drive long distances to training sites. It is not always easy to be in the Guard.

We are not the beer-drinking, inept, weekend warriors we are so often stigmatized as. You have to measure up to the same standards that you have always measured up to on active duty, with very little in the way of resources.

The last thing I want to do here is talk anyone out of being in the Reserve Component after serving on active duty; we need your expertise. The National Guard and the Reserves may be a big help to you when you get out, and maybe you will want to stay to retirement, but don't forget that you are still a soldier, so come ready to soldier. If you do not want to soldier, or are just tired

of soldiering for a while, do not become an in-service recruit. If you decide that ISR is the way to go, come ready to face the challenges and you will reap the rewards. If later you decide that the Reserve Component is what you want, see a Guard or Reserve recruiter after you have stabilized your civilian life. Whatever the case, do not become an In-Service Recruit only to just quit when you get to your Guard or Reserve unit; AWOL here is just like AWOL there, and there are consequences to pay for it.

JOHN A. JETT
SFC, OHARNG
Readiness NCO/MG

A Look Back at WWII Procurement

Dear Sir:

Since my last message was rather long, I decided to defer additional comments on the development and fielding of new equipment that was in place in the '30s and '40s. The only way to understand why it typically took so long to get something really new in the hands of the troops is to learn how the process worked. I don't know how this process works today, but the salient point is that it was the user who made the crucial and ultimate decisions. Ordnance is expected to translate user needs into appropriate specifications with advice as to what is best, recognizing that compromises are the order of the day. For example, you cannot get heavier armament and still get a lighter-weight vehicle. If you want to transport a tank in a plane, it can only weigh so much, and it has to fit inside.

There were 10 steps prescribed for standardization of equipment. First came the decision, approved by G4 of the General Staff, that a specific need for a new or improved item existed. Second was the statement of the military characteristics that the item must have to serve its purpose. This statement was drawn up by a board of officers of the using arm, such as Infantry or Artillery. On each board, an Ordnance officer was one of the members. The third step was the formal initiation of a development program. The Army Service Forces had to approve classification by its type, nomenclature, and a model number, beginning with the letter T. Following the official classification, the project became the responsibility of the appropriate unit of the Research and Development Service to work out.

"The next five steps in peacetime tended to be long drawn out, as the test upon the semiautomatic rifle in the 1920s and 1930s show. First, the men who had designed and built the pilot model subjected it to a series of engineering tests. Each component had to correspond to the specifications. A model that met these requirements was then labeled 'service-test type' and was ready for the next process — service testing. Service tests, conducted by a board under control of

Longtime Reader...

Dear Sir:

Thank you for sending me the January-February issue of *ARMOR*, and for all the past copies you have sent.

I am now in my 95th year, and after reading *ARMOR* with great interest, I always send it on to the librarian of The Tank Museum at Bovington. I now feel it would be helpful if you would send my copy directly to them.

With my thanks and good wishes.

Lady Kathleen Liddell Hart
England

the using arm or occasionally by troops in the field, were to determine the suitability of the equipment for combat in the hands of ordinary soldiers." (page 241, *The Ordnance Department: Planning Munitions For War*, 1955, Office of the Chief of Military History) Such tests almost always revealed that modifications were needed, and after these were incorporated into the item, the using service resumed testing. Modifications for complicated equipment, such as tanks and artillery, could run into the hundreds. The next stage was extended service tests. Major items were usually tested by tactical units.

From these tests came production in some quantity, "limited procurement type." If it was GO, recommendations were made to the Army Service Forces for standardization, and an M number and name resulted. "Nevertheless, in developing most new items, when time was lost needlessly, it was in the course of service testing, modifying, retesting, and extended service testing. If, instead of being submitted to prolonged tests against dummy targets in the United States, new materiel could be shipped to the active theaters for battle trial, then, the Ordnance Department contended, a dual purpose would be served: the research and development staff would have indisputable proof of weaknesses and strong points of the new equipment under real, not simulated, combat conditions, and the armies in the field would have the use of weapons, usable even if far from faultless. Later modifications could be made with greater certainty. Here was a variation of the Ordnance pleas of the 1930s protesting the refusal of the War Department to standardize materiel until it was nearly perfect as possible. Ordnance engineers concurred in Colonel Studler's statement of 1940: 'The best is the enemy of the good.' For years, the Army Ground Forces resisted this approach of shipping new materiel overseas not yet wholly proved. General McNair 'repeatedly objected to issuing materiel possessing even minor defects of design.'" (pp. 241-243)

Regarding the development and standardization of the 76mm gun to replace the 75mm gun for the M4 tank, the process described above was extraordinarily con-

densed in a period of less than one month by 10 September 1942 — months before General Patton landed in North Africa in November 1942. Ordnance had been alerted previously to the experiences of the British with the Sherman in fighting off Rommel and the developments of the Germans to up-gun their tanks, the Panther Mark IV, and the monster Tiger with its 88mm gun.

Regarding the comments of Lewis Sorley in your Jan-Feb 97 issue of what LTC Creighton Abrams wanted and the reaction of an unnamed Ordnance officer who was so concerned about gun tubes wearing out too fast rather than trying to get tank commanders what they needed, I think it not unusual to find blokes anywhere in any outfit at any time who don't get the message. But, if higher velocity gun tubes wore out faster than replacements could be furnished, what then? Would it be better to stick a while longer with a lower velocity gun than have none at all? Such trade-offs are always something to be dealt with, and you'd like to think that there are guys around who do the right thing when it is time to upgrade and field equipment, and not wait until it may be too late. Going back to the story of the incredibly rapid standardization of the 76mm gun that then-LTC Abrams wanted in 1944 when Ordnance had completed the work in 1942, now whose ox should be gored?

Finally, General Marshall, the Chief of Staff, commented in 1945 on what he considered unjust criticism aimed at the Ordnance Department: "In some of the public discussions of such matters (the quality of American ordnance) criticism was leveled at the Ordnance Department for not producing better weapons. This department produced with rare efficiency what it was asked to produce, and these instructions came from the General Staff, of which I am the responsible head, transmitting the resolved views of the officers with the combat troops or air forces, of the commanders in the field. (See pg. 258, same source).

I hope that what I have provided will put to rest the extended dispute of who was responsible for what, and when, concerning the undergunned Sherman.

COL GEORGE EDDY (Ret.)
Via e-mail

Tank Dispersion in Formations

Dear Sir:

After submitting the articles on M1A2s and Smart Ammunition... the question I asked myself is how far do we REALLY want to spread our formation? The calculations I used in the article were based on straight line distance with line of sight (LOS) to all enemy vehicles in their formation (i.e. the Saudi/Kuwaiti/Iraqi desert). Using backwards planning of a sort, I then figured how far we could spread out and still target the enemy's formation.

An article in the Jul-Aug 96 *Military Review* by BG (Ret.) Wass de Czege on the Mobile Strike Force (MSF) concept seems to indicate that a key planning factor in future force deployment is targeting. ("...Although the MSF never totally achieved it, all 800 fighting vehicles and 2,200 support vehicles in the average division could be theoretically attacked and defeated in a ten-minute engagement by weapons organic to or in support of a single MSF brigade...") If we get caught up in a strictly targeting mentality, we begin to think like the Air Force, which still has never won a war single-handed. What we need to figure may well be a different matter when we look at the platoon leader deployed with his platoon in the field.

Maybe we should determine our dispersion based on how much area an M1A2's gunner's primary sight (GPS) and commander's independent thermal viewer (CITV) can simultaneously "see" at our desired engagement range, and multiply times four. Y (GPS degree field of view) + (CITV field of view) $\times 4$. Geometric calculation of the cone formed with a base of x-meters at the far end from our main gun with sides equal to the distance we wish to observe/engage shows us how much one tank can see and target at any given time. Multiplying times four to allow for the rest of the platoon and ensuring our vehicles' 'cones' overlap might reveal for us how much we truly want to disperse. What do the master gunners say?

If the idea behind doctrinal distances is mutual support and not targeting capability, then I only figured half of the equation I should have offered. It really bothers me that writers in *ARMOR*'s editorial page have not attacked my methods as I believe only CRITICAL analysis will yield true answers.

CPT MIKE PRYOR
Via e-mail

"Bandits": What's In a Name?

Dear Sir:

I am researching the origins of our battalion nickname, the "Bandits," and need some help from *ARMOR* readers. My research indicates that the Bandit nickname was used by 1-32 Armor (Elvis's unit) here in Friedberg since at least 1963, and was adopted by 4-67 Armor when the battalion redesignated in 1988. I am also trying to learn the origin of the unofficial crest that we use, which is a white skull on a black diamond superimposed over the Armor insignia.

I can be reached at DSN 324-3441 (Germany) or by E-mail at CreedR@email.hannau.army.mil, or write me at Unit 21104, Box 36, APO AE 09074. Thanks for any help you can render.

CPT RICHARD D. CREED JR.
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